REMARKS

The following is intended as a full and complete response to the Final Office Action dated January 15, 2010 having a shorted statutory period for response set to expire on April 15, 2010. The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5, 7-14, 16, 18-22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Merrill (U.S. Pub. 2002/0008703). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Rejections under §103(a)

Claim 1, as previously presented, recites the limitations of identifying a set of at least two graphical components associated with identifiers that satisfy pattern matching criteria. Claim 1 further recites the limitations of performing an operation on an attribute of each graphical component in the set of graphical components that have an identifier that satisfies the pattern matching criteria. Merrill fails to teach or suggest these limitations.

Merrill discloses a Visual Basic programming environment that uses OLE (Object Linking and Embedding) control as an interface. At paragraph [0024], Merrill discloses a data encapsulation technique where an object is associated with various "properties" that can be associated with one or more methods/functions. Accordingly, "the object hides its internal composition, structure and operation and exposes its functionality to client programs that utilize the object only through one or more interfaces" (Merrill at paragraph [0024]). As an example, paragraph [0326] of Merrill recites a command in a script that states: "agent.object.Property=value," which specifies that the term "value" is set as the amount of the parameter "Property" of the object "agent.object". The Examiner equates this conventional Visual Basic command in Merrill as disclosing the claimed limitations of performing the operation on an attribute of a graphical component that satisfies the pattern matching criteria.

The Examiner specifically points to paragraph [0340] of Merrill for disclosing the claimed pattern matching criteria. However, this passage of Merrill discloses only the standard Visual Basic programming environment that uses OLE, which is described above. As would be well understood by persons having ordinary skill in the art, conventional programming languages, such as Visual Basic, allow a programmer to set

the value of a single variable or parameter per command. In contrast, the claimed technique allows an operation to be performed on an attribute of each graphical component that has an identifier that satisfies the pattern matching criteria. Thus, the claimed technique allows for an operation to be performed on multiple objects using a single command. By contrast, in Merrill, such programming functionality is not possible. Thus, the claimed technique, reflected in previously presented claim 1, provides the non-obvious advantage of making programming of adjustments to the CAD model easier for the developer. In the Final Office Action, the Examiner argues that since the objects in Merrill have inherited properties that can be modified by an array of functions, multiple inherited properties can be modified with one function. However, in Merrill, in such an implementation, multiple parameters of only a single object could be modified. Again, by contrast, the technique of claim 1 allows an operation to be performed on an attribute associated with at least two graphical components having identifiers that satisfy the pattern matching criteria.

In addition, the different parameters associated with an object that are modified in Merrill are not equivalent to the at least two graphical components having identifiers that satisfy the pattern matching criteria, as recited in claim 1. The Examiner has interpreted the "properties" of an object in Merrill to be equivalent to the claimed attributes. See Final Office Action at page 3. The Examiner is also interpreting the "properties" of an object in Merrill to be equivalent to the claimed at least two graphical components having identifiers that satisfy the pattern matching criteria. In this analysis, the Examiner is violating traditional principles of claim construction, which require that different claim terms be given separate and distinct meanings. Again, because the elements, "attributes" and "graphical components," constitute two different claim terms, these elements must be interpreted as being two separate and distinct constructs. Thus, the same construct disclosed in Merrill (i.e., the "properties" associated with an object) cannot be equated to both of these claim elements.

As the foregoing illustrates, Merrill fails to teach or suggest each and every limitation of claim 1. Therefore, Merrill cannot render claim 1 obvious. For these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is allowable and requests allowance of the claim. Furthermore, independent claims 8, 12, and 18 recite limitations similar to

those of claim 1 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. The remaining claims depend from allowable claims 1, 8, 12, and 18, and are, therefore, also in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above remarks, Applicants believe that they have overcome all of the rejections set forth in the Final Office Action mailed January 15, 2010 and that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, please contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted

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